

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Colombia

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1. One of the most important questions under discussion at the private meetings of the XI Communist Plenum of the Partido Comunista de Colombia (PCC), was the attitude of the Party with regard to "Gaitanist-Liberalism".
2. In this matter the Secretary General of the Party, Gilberto Vieira White, stated that the Gaitanist movement has gained influence among the Liberal masses. Leadership of the Liberal Party, as well as the presidential candidacy of Dr. Jorge Eliecer Gaitan in 1950, are faits accomplis, which must be taken into consideration in formulating Party policy.
3. Vieira White then defended Gaitan's position with regard to the bourgeois, or pseudo-capitalist groups of Colombia. He stated that it would be wrong to contend that Gaitan has capitulated to the oligarchies, yielding to them unconditionally. Some of the delegates requested an explanation of these remarks, since it was understood that "Communism was to go along with Gaitanism" as it had with "Lopesism" under Augusto Duran's leadership of the Party. It was then mentioned that one of the harshest criticisms leveled at Duran was that of collaborationist, and that because of this, he had made the Communists an appendage of the Liberal Party. In answer Vieira White stated that these observations were basically correct, but that the present situation is quite different from that of 1946. At that time the Liberal Party was in power and, although it could not be considered an ally of Communism, it was politically neutral. In contrast, the present Conservative Government considers Communism as an out-and-out enemy to be destroyed. During the Liberal regime Communism was able to strengthen itself without encountering opposition from the government and was able to build a true Marxist organization. Such is not the case under the present administration.
4. Vieira White went on to say that he had talked to Gaitan personally, and that it was evident that Gaitan did not look with disfavor upon the tacit, private adhesion of Communists to his party, since he considered them very effective in anti-Conservative agitation.
5. A later report states that Victor Julio Silva, leftwing liberal President of the Confederacion de Trabajadores de Colombia (CTC), recently discussed with Jorge Eliecer Gaitan certain aspects of cooperation between the Liberals and Communists. During this conversation it was indicated that Gaitan had decided not to accept publicly Communist support. He feels that a national

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Communist movement of less than 8,000 persons, rather than helping his "national restoration movement" (Gaitan's slogan), would only prejudice it. The overwhelming majority of Liberals are Catholics, and it is believed that the mere mention of Communism would disaffect them.

6. Gaitan is reported to have stated that he is studying the possibility of establishing secret ententes with the governments of Venezuela, Ecuador and Argentina. He feels this is necessary in view of the recent challenging and aggressive attitude of President Mariano Ospina Perez, whom he believes will refuse to turn over the reins of government on legal pretexts when and if the Liberals win in 1980. Gaitan indicated that the Argentine government could be considered a paragon of administration and political procedures.

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